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Dakota County Social Services

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**DATE:** November 9, 2020  
**TO:** Dakota County School Districts  
**FROM:** Suzanne Tuttle  
Deputy Director, Social Services  
**SUBJECT:** Educational Neglect and Truancy Referrals

On November 5, 2020 Governor Tim Walz signed Emergency [Executive Order 20-94](#). This order states:

*During the 2020-21 school year, school districts and charter schools are strongly discouraged from referring students for truancy programs and services under Minnesota Statutes 2019, section 260A.02, subdivision 3, or reporting students for educational neglect under Laws of Minnesota 2020, 1st Special Session, Chapter 2, article 7, until school districts and charter schools have exhausted all efforts to engage truant students and their families. MDE and the Minnesota Department of Human Services will continue to provide additional guidance to school districts and charter schools, and child welfare agencies regarding this provision.*

This order aligns with our current Truancy and Educational Neglect referral guidance that strongly encourages school staff to make and document every effort possible to engage both the student and their parent before immediately reporting. We encourage districts to create “district-wide” attendance policies.

School staff are highly encouraged to utilize our truancy and educational neglect liaisons, as well as Children and Family Services Intake for consults prior to reporting. Please see [our website](#) for our new referral criteria and updated forms which includes the listing of our school district liaisons.

Thank you for your partnership in working towards the best educational outcomes for all students.

If you have any questions, contact:

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All the best to you and your students this coming school year as we navigate a challenging and ever-changing school year together.

